

[Mayor Buddy Dyer's Cities of Service] ORLANDO CARES



ORLANDO CARES TEAM: NEW AMERICORPS VISTAS

The ORLANDO CARES team has expanded! Our team now has 12 people working diligently in sustaining Mayor Buddy Dyer's Cities of Service Program. Marcia Hope Goodwin, serves as Chief Service Officer and Director, Hiba George as the Cities of Service Coordinator, Valerie Perez as the AmeriCorps VISTA Leader and four AmeriCorps VISTAs, Amanda Smiley, coordinating Mayor Buddy's Book Club, Shaneece Dixon, coordinating Third Grade Reads powered by Read2Succeed, Chandra Griffin, coordinating PathFinders, and Caitlyn Glattin, coordinating The Garden.

In addition to these dedicated individuals, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) has provided four Summer Associates who are helping us build capacity within all Orlando Cares programs. They are Treasure Leach, Joel Kuriakose, Blaine Phillips, and Fernando Urena. We are extremely grateful to the Florida State Office of CNCS for our longtime partnership and their steadfast support, which has sustained Orlando Cares.

Revamped, Renewed and Ready

According to the After School Alliance, more than 14 million children in America are left alone after school. Between the hours of 3 p.m. and 6 p.m., juvenile crimes and experimentation with drugs, alcohol and sex are at their highest levels. These and other statistics demonstrate why it is necessary to have programs dedicated to improving youth educational outcomes and community safety.

ORLANDO CARES was created when the City of Orlando received a Cities of Service Leadership Grant from Bloomberg Philanthropies and the Rockefeller Foundation to plan and coordinate citywide volunteerism that addresses specific needs. Orlando Cares is Orlando's first "impact volunteering" program. A number of metrics are tracked to measure the impact of each initiative. Since our launch in 2011, our programs have undergone several changes. We now have six initiatives.

MAYOR BUDDY'S BOOK CLUB encourages leisure time reading and creative expression among fifth to eighth grade students by making reading fun. Leisure time reading is a strong indicator of how academically successful students are in later years. However, many studies indicate that children are reading less and less as they get older. This lack of reading has been linked to stress and loneliness in later years. To address this, we host book clubs at various community centers and Orange County Public Library branches and engage book club members in fun activities at "End of Book" parties.

PRESCHOOL AMBASSADORS, an initiative created by Orlando Cares and the Early Learning Coalition of Orange County, helps prepare preschoolers for kindergarten. Our Ready Readers visit Voluntary Preschool (VPK) centers for an hour each week to read aloud to children. This helps to build upon the literacy instruction at the centers and improves the children's vocabulary. Volunteer Early Literacy Liaisons instruct families on best practices for increasing early literacy activities at home by leading early literacy presentations and distributing literacy tool-kits to parents.



THIRD GRADE READS powered by Read2Succeed is a partnership with the Foundation for Orange County Public Schools. Read2Succeed helps first and second graders improve their vocabulary and reading fluency skills. Through this program, our volunteers and reading assistants are building students' reading skills, vocabularies and confidence. The skills learned are essential to students reading on grade level by third grade.

PATHFINDERS is a six-week afterschool program for middle school students, which expands their awareness of career options through, career mentoring, self-exploration and academic planning. The program curriculum, designed by our partner, Junior Achievement of Central Florida, introduces participants to a variety of concepts, including job interview basics and the importance of making short and long term academic and career plans. Volunteer Career Coaches from a variety of industries explain their jobs and the academic preparation necessary. Hosted by our partner, After School All Stars, more than 400 students have experienced PathFinders this year.

THE GARDEN is a 10-week program that teaches students the basics of gardening and healthy nutrition as they grow their own produce in personal container gardens, outdoor raised garden beds and hydroponic gardens. Guest speakers help facilitate group discussions and fun activities related to water conservation, environmental awareness, food waste, careers in agriculture and more. Our aim is to encourage our students to embrace a healthy nutritional lifestyle, as well as make positive life choices.

Our newest initiative, **TAKE HEART ORLANDO**, is a volunteer CPR program led by the Orlando Fire Department, which educates those in our city who are among the 70 percent of Americans who do not know CPR. In the United States, approximately 400,000 people have suffered from sudden cardiac arrest. Unfortunately, 89 percent of these individuals die because they don't receive immediate CPR. Take Heart Orlando provides a quick, 30-minute training in "hands-only" CPR for all residents, businesses and organizations in Orlando.



Our premiere Hands-Only CPR training program, Take Heart Orlando, has already trained 3900 civilians within Orlando. Amongst those trained, 1000 are OPCS bus drivers. Bank of America and CNL Financial Group, Inc. employees have been trained as well as the Orlando Predators football team.

Currently, we are in the process of training the Universal Studios employees. Orlando Fire Department staff train and teach Orlando citizens about the importance of early response in emergency situations. Trained volunteers are asked to train others in the life-saving, hands only CPR techniques. To schedule training for your employees, organization member or congregation call 407.246.4277 or visit orlandocares.net.

PRESCHOOL AMBASSADORS

According to "The Early Catastrophe" by Hart and Risley (2004), there is a 30 million word disparity between children in lower and higher socio-economic groups. Early literacy, from birth to 5, has been proven to close this gap. Our Preschool Ambassadors program is a partnership with the Early Learning Coalition of Orange County, which places volunteer, **Ready Readers**, in preschools in Orlando's underserved areas. **Ready Readers** help preschool students expand their vocabularies by reading aloud to them once or more per week for a semester or more. Participating pre-kindergarten centers are located throughout the city and Ready Readers are placed at convenient locations after a one-hour training. Orlando Cares is recruiting volunteer **Ready Readers** for the upcoming school year. For information call 407.246.2500 or visit orlandocares.net.

Hart, B. & Risley, T.R. "The Early Catastrophe", (2004). Education Review, 77 (1), 100-118.



"Through ORLANDO CARES, we will engage volunteers in programs that help youth improve their academic success, increase their literacy skills, plan viable career choices and avoid the juvenile justice system. In our plan, we have created volunteer opportunities that impact educational outcomes and contribute to the well-being of our community."

– Mayor Buddy Dyer



The Garden, our 10-week program that teaches children about the importance of eating healthy produce through planting and harvesting vegetables and herbs, is going strong this summer. More than 60 youth are learning how to maintain healthy diets, the science of gardening and a variety of careers in agriculture. Each week, guest speakers instruct the children on topics such as bugs, hydroponics, healthy food choices and careers in agriculture.

In July, The Garden participants visited Harry P. Leu Gardens where they explored and learned the inner-workings of a large botanical garden. At the end of the program, August 11, 12 and 15, participants will enjoy a harvest celebration using the produce they have grown to prepare a healthy meal! If you love gardening and would like to volunteer for the Fall sessions of The Garden call 407.246.2500 or visit orlandocares.net.

"It was great to volunteer, not only in my community, but in my neighborhood. As a garden volunteer we all grew together, and because I live so close, I am still able to check on the kids and help maintain the garden." - Gladys Cortiella, Garden Guide

Personal Story of the Month

Jasmine, who is a student at Odyssey Middle School, wants to be a graphic designer or video game designer when she grows up. The most valuable lesson she learned during the PathFinders program was that in order to achieve her goals she will have to work for it. She said the best part of the program was figuring out who she wants to be instead of being confused about her future career goals. She said, "The PathFinders program helped me by teaching me how to be professional for potential employers and how to stay on the right path to achieve my goals."

3rd Grade Reads

POWERED BY Read2Succeed

Being able to help my students week after week gives me great joy and fills me with pride. I'm amazed at how much I've helped them grow and seeing their progress makes me so happy."

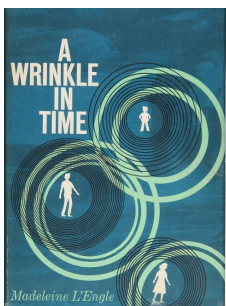
– Ameerah Ally, Third Grade Reads
powered by Read to Succeed Volunteer



This year, Third Grade Reads powered by Read2Succeed has served 120 students in 10 Orange County Public School within the City of Orlando. Our goal is to serve 175 students by the end of the 2014-2015 school year.

Our lead partner, the Foundation for Orange County Public Schools, reports that participating second grade students' reading fluency increased by 96.6 percent and first grade students improved their vocabulary knowledge by 68 percent. All participating students made gains.

According to participating teachers, the program had a positive impact on students' oral fluency scores and their self-esteem in the classroom. Reading volunteers also noted students' attitudes toward school and academic achievement improved.

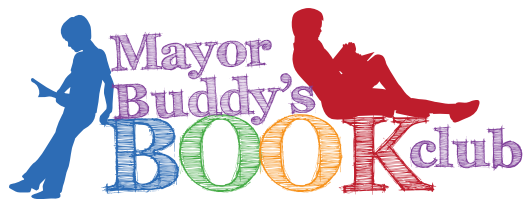


Current Book:

A Wrinkle in Time

Written By:

Madeleine L'Engle



On June 25, Mayor Buddy's Book Club (MBBC) members celebrated finishing their 22nd book, *Fablehaven*, by Brandon Mull at the downtown Orlando Public Library. More than 50 book club members attended and tested their creativity with several fun-filled activities inspired by the book. All members received a free copy of our next book: *A Wrinkle in Time*.

Members who read *A Wrinkle in Time* are welcome to join us on August 13 at 3:30 p.m. in the downtown library, 101 E. Central Blvd., for another "End of Book" party with fun crafts, games and prizes!

In addition to the downtown library, MBBC sessions are held at three new locations: Wadeview, Hankins and Northwest Community Centers. Elementary and middle-school students are invited to join these in-person book clubs. MBBC members can also participate at mayor.ocls.info and receive relevant blog posts and updates on the "End of Book" celebration on August 13. We are recruiting adult volunteers to host book clubs at libraries and city community centers. For information call 407.246.2500 or visit orlandocares.net.



PATH FINDERS

PathFinders is a career awareness program, which encourages middle-school students to pursue higher education leading to future careers. This summer more than 200 students learned what they are interested in and passionate about before exploring a variety of career options.

More than 20 volunteer **Career Coaches** shared their careers and helped participants understand that they can be anything they want to be with the right education and preparation. PathFinders helped the students discover new talents and new career possibilities. Students from Carver, Lee and Memorial Middle Schools prepared career plans and visited the UCF Simulation and Training Institute and Orlando Science Center to explore a wide spectrum of careers of the future. Students prepared an academic career plan to guide them through high school. We are recruiting **Career Coaches** for the Fall PathFinders sessions. To volunteer call 407.246.2500 or visit orlandocares.net.



Mayor Buddy Dyer's Cities of Service

ORLANDO CARES

WHERE SERVICE IS THE SOLUTION.

We need your help! To make sure all of the students participating in our programs are getting the support they need, we need **VOLUNTEERS!** Volunteers help our students by becoming role models, tutors and mentors.

If you're interested in volunteering, visit orlandocares.net or Contact Us about the initiative of your choice!

Orlando Cares

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The Garden

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Take Heart Orlando

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Updates & Announcements



Congratulations to Orlando Cares on beginning its fourth year. Mayor Buddy Dyer's Cities of Service program was founded on March 31, 2011.

Special thanks to Cities of Service, Inc. for providing the \$100,000 Impact Volunteering grant that supports four Orlando Cares initiatives and for your ongoing technical assistance. Thanks to local supporter Florida Hospital for the generous contribution of a \$15,000 grant to support The Garden.

"Being a Summer Associate VISTA has given me so much experience. Whether it is dealing with all types of children, completing projects or being given a task that seems impossible and finishing it with the help of the team my work is extremely rewarding. During this experience, I've helped several children do better and I see the improvement every time I see them. I gained leadership, people and organization skills beyond what I thought I would learn. I truly wouldn't trade it for anything else I could have done this summer." – Fernando Urena, Orlando Cares Summer VISTA Associate

Calendar

Thursday August 7, 2014	4 – 5 p.m.	Mayor Buddy's Book Club	Downtown Library
Friday August 8, 2014	3:15 – 5 p.m.	The Garden	Colonialtown Neighborhood Center
Monday, August 11, 2014	3:30 – 5 p.m.	Garden Harvest Festival	Wadeview Community Center
Tuesday August 12, 2014	3:30 – 5 p.m.	Garden Harvest Festival	Rosemont Community Center
Wednesday, August 13, 2014	3:30 – 5 p.m.	MBBC End of Book Party	Downtown Library
Friday, August 15, 2014	3:30 – 5 p.m.	Garden Harvest Festival	Colonialtown Neighborhood Center
September 3, 2014	7 p.m.	Take Heart Orlando	Orlando Public Library, Albertson Room
September 11, 2014	10:30 a.m.	Take Heart Orlando	Orange County Library Washington Park Branch
September 13, 2014	11 a.m.	Take Heart Orlando	Orange County Library Southeast Branch
September 20, 2014	2 p.m.	Take Heart Orlando	Orange County Library Herndon Branch